

Message Text

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17

ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 L-02 SP-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 H-02 OES-03 HEW-02

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9504

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, JA

SUBJ: U S CITRUS: FUNGICIDE

DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE FOR HUME AND FITZSIMMONDS

REF: A) TOKYO 5015; B) TOKYO 4929

1. SUMMARY. AGATT MET 16 APR (A.M.) WITH VAN HORN OF SUNKIST AND SUSAKI OF NISHIMOTO BOEKI (SOLE IMPORTER FOR SUNKIST) AND REVEALED PLANS TO MAKE STRONG PUSH FOR MHW APPROVAL OF OPP AND TBZ AND VAN HORN AGREED FULLY. ALSO SUGGESTED KUNKIST/NISHIMOTO WITHDRAW REQUESTS FOR CUSTOM AND/OR MHW CLEARANCE OF FRUIT NOW AT PORTS(UNLESS THEY CERTAIN IT WILL NOT TEST POSITIVE TO PROHIBITED CHEMICALS) IN ORDE TO AVOID JEOPARDIZING (A) CHANCES FOR SPEEDY MHW APPROVAL OPP AND TBZ, B) SUNKIST IMAGE IN JAPAN, AND (C) LONG RANGE MARKET POTENTIAL.

2. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND LONG DELIBERATION WITH STAFF AGATT CONCLUDED ABOVE ACTION NECESSARY. IN MEETING 16 APR WITH DR ISHIMARU, DIR GEN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH BUREAU, MHW, LEARNED THAT ISHIMARU HAS VERY HIGH OPINION OF ANW MUCH FAITH IN SUNKIST PROMISES. FROM RELIABLE SOURCES WE HAVE LEARNED AND ARE 99 PERCENT SURE THAT OPP AND/OR TBZ WILL SHOW UP ON SHIPMENTS NOW IN QUESTION VIZ., SK 18, SK19, AND AT LEAST PART OF SK 17.

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APPEARS ALMOST CERTAIN TOKYO AND OTHER LOCAL GOVT SANITATION

OFFICES WILL RECHECK FRUIT AT RETAIL LEVEL IN HOPES OF EMBARRASSING NATIONAL RULING PARTY SHOULD THEY DETECT CHEMICALS ON FRUIT ALREADY PASSED THRU CUSTOMS. OPPOSITION FACTIONS WILL THEN BLOW IT UP IN MEDIA, DRIVING MHW TO HARD LINE AND PERHAPS MAKINGIT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO COOPERATE IN APPROVAL OF OPP AND TBZ.

3. VAN HORN LISTENED CAREFULLY TO OUR ARGUMENTS, ASKING MANY QUESTIONS. WE AKED HIM IF THE SHIPMENTS COULD BE DIVIDED ACCORDING TO PACKING HOUSE NUMBER AND ONLY THE QUOTE CLEAN UNQUOTE FRUIT LET IN SINCE HE CLAIMS ANY OPP PRESENT IS THERE BY MISTAKE PROBABLY AT PACKING HOUSE. VAN HORN SAID IF FRUIT CLEARS PORT AUTHORITIES AND IS TESTED LATER BY LOCAL GOVT THEY VERY LIKELY TO FIND ILLEGAL CHEMICALS. HE ALSO STRESSED MORE THAN ONCE QUOTE WE ARE NOT NOW REPEAT NOW USING THESE CHEMICALS UNQUOTE.

4. THIS IS VERY DIFFICULT DECISION FOR SUNKIST. VAN HORN SAYS RESHIPMENT MAY MEAN LOSS OF OVER \$1 MILLION DIRECT COSTS TO SAY NOTHING OF SHORT ITERM MARKET LOST. WE POINTED OUT COST WOULD BE HIGHER IF FRUIT HAD TO BE PULLED OUT OF RETAIL/WHOLESALE MARKETS AFTER LOCAL GOVT DETECTION OF CHEMICALS, BUT THE DECISION IS NOT OURS AND WE ONLY GIVING OUR HONEST OPINION.

5. RE AIDE MEMOIRE. HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT LAST PARA PLAN TO CHANGE IT TO READ QUOTE THE APPROVAL OF THESE FUNGICIDES IS REQUESTED FOR USE WITH THE PROTECTIVE WAXES NECESSARY FOR PROPER APPLICATION END QUOTE.

6. MHW VERY LIKELY TO REQUEST WE ALLOW THEM TO STRIKE DIPHENYL FROM APPROVED LIST IF AND WHEN OPP AND TBZ APPROVED. IF THIS OKAY WITH U.S. SIDE, WILL HELP MHW IN DEALING WITH FOOD SANITATION COUNCIL. VAN HORN SAID SUNKIST FULLY SUPPORTS AGATT DECISION TO PUSH FOR APPROVAL OPP AND TBZ ASAP.
HODGSON

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